

11 June 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director/Intelligence
SUBJECT: Proposal to Invite Khrushchev to Washington

1. As one who has no "inside" knowledge of the tactics, strategy and intentions of our Government with respect to the next phase of the negotiations over Berlin, I venture to suggest that the present impasse calls for a dramatic, daring and constructive initiative on the part of the United States. It might take the following form: The President would announce that the Foreign Ministers' negotiations, despite every effort on our part, have not borne fruit and their results do not appear to justify a full Summit Conference. Nevertheless, in the hope of finding a way to reopen fruitful discussions, the President invites Khrushchev to visit him on an informal basis in Washington or Gettysburg, to talk things over as Nehru had done. He would be glad to have the visit extended to include any part of the United States which Khrushchev would care to see. In view of the latter's deep interest in agriculture, it would be particularly desirable for him to visit our farming areas and, of course, the great industrial centers would be open to him. If possible, the President would be glad to accompany him on at least a part of his trip. The President had already declared in his State of the Union Message that he would go anywhere that was necessary to promote the cause of peace.

2. There are many benefits which might accrue from such a measure. It would provide a "breather" in the cold war struggle over Berlin which would probably benefit us more than the other side. It could provide the opportunity for a graceful acceptance of an eventual Summit meeting, without our seeming to have been dragged in reluctantly, as in the case of the Foreign Ministers' meeting. It would also demonstrate to the world that the US is a country of "big" people. Its government is resourceful and flexible while not retreating from the principle of world peace.

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3. Such an invitation would undoubtedly galvanize the non-participants, arousing intense curiosity and some measure of alarm. This might not be undesirable with respect to our NATO associates. It would provide an effective prod to the froward De Gaulle. It would remove some of the onus that Macmillan has labored under since his Moscow visit, of being the only one of the Big Three who has tried to smooth things out with Khrushchev on a face to face basis. While it would undoubtedly stir up German apprehension over a "separate deal," it would provide a healthy reminder that our policy is not anchored exclusively on the rock of Adenauer. Some of the nervousness could be allayed if the Germans were told in advance.

4. In other areas, the impact would be salutary. The Chinese Communists would probably be quite concerned over what their lively co-Partner in the Bloc was up to. The satellites would be intrigued. Nehru and other leading neutralists would be relieved that state to state and leader to leader courtesy was still possible after the Geneva rigidities. The United Nations might be tactfully brought in to the responsibilities of host.

5. The gesture might be interpreted by some as providing a propaganda opportunity for Khrushchev. The opportunity, however, is even greater for the President who is at least as capable of "stealing a show" as the bouncy Soviet leader. Particularly, if we take the first initiative, this might prove a perfect occasion to recapture from Khrushchev the inroads he has made on our primacy in the field of Peace.

6. Finally, there is even the possibility that what Khrushchev says is right: that a face to face encounter of the two men who bear the highest power in the world could lead to some actual composition of differences. I am, of course, not optimistic about any basic settlement of these differences, but it is possible that some area of understanding could be found which would at least buy time in the long patient process of determining how we and the Communists are to coexist.

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Chief, SRS/DDI

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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : DDI

DATE: 11 Jun 59

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FROM :

SUBJECT:

Bob, for slightly different reasons, I heartily endorse suggestion
that we invite Khrushchev to the US. If Geneva breaks up in such a way that
we cannot officially go to the summit, this provides an ideal way to maintain
the appearance of flexibility while firmly refusing to negotiate under pressure.
Moreover, if Khrushchev is coming to the US the Soviets can hardly afford to
sharply increase pressures on Berlin before or during the visit.

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I share feelings that an invitation would redound sharply to our
propaganda benefit and have a salutary effect on our allies. It would, as
says, reduce the pressure on Macmillan and make de Gaulle and der Alte think twice.
Furthermore I have long thought that, entirely aside from the propaganda advantages
of a willingness to receive Khrushchev, his visit would provide an admirable
opportunity to tell him a few home truths without the usual risk that our views
are filtered through so many layers of Soviet bureaucracy that he may be

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seriously misinformed as to where we really stand. The more I think of it the thought of a bilateral "Summit without a summit" appeals to me as a way out of a formal negotiation and of putting K on the defensive.

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